

Revitalization Program Partners

The local neighborhood business district revitalization program must involve groups throughout the community to be successful. Different groups have different interests in the neighborhood business district. And, while each may have a particular focus, all groups ultimately share the common goal of revitalizing the commercial district. By involving a broad range of stakeholders in the process, the neighborhood business district program can help each group realize that this common goal exists and that cooperation is essential for successful revitalization. Furthermore, by identifying each organization's greatest strengths, the neighborhood business district program can help focus that group's energy in the areas where it will be most effective and have the most to contribute. Groups typically represented and involved in successful local business district revitalization programs include:

Retail & Service Business Owners

Retail and service sector activity is an important part of the neighborhood business district's economic base; consequently, business owners have a vested interest in the success of the revitalization program. Retailers are often most interested in neighborhood business district promotional activities, and are often the most valuable contributors. However, their involvement in other neighborhood commercial district activities can also be beneficial.

Property Owners

Since property owners literally own the neighborhood business district, they

have a direct interest in the program's success and often become active participants in the revitalization process. Absentee owners, though, may show little or no interest in the program. Nonetheless, they should be kept informed about revitalization activities and, as the program develops greater competency in directing the districts' economic growth, owners should continue to be invited to take part in projects.

Business Organizations

Merchants and professional associations and the chamber of commerce are important players in most neighborhood business district revitalization programs because of their interest in the community's commercial development. Business organizations can help the district program by providing liaison with local and regional economic development agencies, helping businesses expand, recruiting new businesses and sharing information resources.

Financial Institutions

Local financial institutions benefit from a revitalized neighborhood business district in many ways, from making new business loans to being able to attract new industry to the community. Banks and savings and loans can support the revitalization program by helping package loans, taking part in interest buy-down and other financial incentive programs, providing leadership and seeking innovative ways to stimulate neighborhood business district economic development. Many financial institutions also find that participation in

the local neighborhood business district revitalization program helps satisfy their directives under the Community Reinvestment Act.

Consumers

In many ways, consumers stand to benefit the most from a revitalized neighborhood business district offering goods and services that meet their needs. Many local consumers who may not belong to an existing community organization will still be interested in participating in the revitalization effort and in helping make the neighborhood business district - and the community - a livelier place to be.

District Government

Without the support and involvement of local government, it is doubtful that a neighborhood business district revitalization program will achieve long-lasting success. Local government can help provide the financial and information resources, technical skills and leadership to the revitalization effort. Because local government plays a major role in direction the community's economic growth, it must be an active participant in restructuring the neighborhood business district's economic base and developing innovative solutions to neighborhood business district issues.

Media

Neighborhood business district revitalization means creating new jobs, generating new investments and bringing more money into the community - all newsworthy activities. Therefore, media outlets usually are major supporters of a neighborhood business district revitalization efforts. In addition to publicizing the program's successes,

media can provide information about local market characteristics to help the revitalization effort find better ways to meet consumer needs.

District of Columbia Office of Planning and the DC Marketing Center

These groups can provide the local neighborhood business district program with market data and other technical information about the neighborhood business district's market area. They can also help the program identify resources and establish relationships with local and national economic development agencies.

Historical Societies and Historical Preservation Organizations

- **Cultural Tourism DC**
202.661.7581
1250 H St NW Ste 1000
Washington, DC 20005
- **DC Preservation League**
202.955.5616
1815 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20006
- **Scenic America**
202.543.6200
801 Pennsylvania Ave., SE
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20003
- **Nation Trust for Historic Preservation**
202.588.6000
1785 Massachusetts Ave, NW,
Washington, DC 20036
- **Historical Society of Washington, DC**
202.383.1800
801 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
- **Humanities Council of Washington**
202.347.1732
1331 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

These groups can contribute expertise in local history, preservation technology and related fields to the neighborhood business district revitalization program.

Civic clubs and neighborhood associations

By taking part in the revitalization program, civic clubs and neighborhood associations can help improve the community's quality of life and make the neighborhood business district a more pleasant and vibrant place for community activities. Please see this district web site:

http://oco.eom.dc.gov/info/neighbor_assoc2.shtm

Schools

Schools can contribute in several ways to successful neighborhood business district revitalization. First, by involving young people in the revitalization process, the neighborhood business district program can reach a segment of the community that may not be familiar with your neighborhood business district. Second, they can help students become positive contributors to the community's quality of life. Finally, by giving students opportunities to use their academic skills in a "real world" environment, they can help the neighborhood business district revitalization effort implement programs and activities and become both valued customers and employees.

Source: Revitalizing Downtown, National Main Street Center, 1991
